VETERANS JOURNAL



PUBLISHED BY

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The information in this journal is being provided to make the veteran community aware of some current events, activities and veterans issues that are of mutual concern. From time to time, we will include some relevant information important enough to be repeated to insure that veterans and their families are aware of the full range of benefits and entitlements available to them.



SEASON'S GREETINGS AND BEST WISHES FOR A SAFE AND HAPPY HOLIDAY!



"Deadline Looming"



COLUMBUS (Nov. 2, 2012) – A total of 60,593 Ohio veterans and family members have received payments from the Ohio Veterans Bonus totaling \$50,893,704 – and other eligible veterans are urged to take advantage of this special thank-you for their service from Ohio voters.

Action is particularly critical for two groups of veterans – those from the Persian Gulf War and Iraq War eras. The deadline to apply for Persian Gulf veterans is December 31, 2013. Iraq War veterans face a deadline of December 31, 2014 to apply.

The citizens of Ohio overwhelmingly approved the Ohio Veterans Bonus in November 2009 for veterans of the Persian Gulf War, Iraq War and Afghanistan War eras. The law implementing the Bonus set a deadline for Persian Gulf War

veterans to apply of December 31, 2013. The same law set the deadline for Iraq War veterans as the third year following a date determined by the President as the end of the conflict. Tentatively, this date is the termination date of the Iraq Campaign Medal, which was December 31, 2011, making the deadline for Bonus application for service in Iraq December 31, 2014. No deadline has yet been announced for the Afghanistan War.

"Every veteran who's served during our recent wars is eligible for the Bonus," Ohio Department of Veterans Services Director Tom Moe said. "We're very pleased with the response we've had to this point, but we're not going to rest in getting out the word. We particularly want to be sure that we reach all of our Gulf War and Iraq veterans."

"I'm also calling on our entire Ohio veterans' community to be sure that our veterans of today know about the Bonus, and take the time to apply for it," Director Moe continued. "It's a simple process that can be started with a phone call



"Deadline Looming" (Continued from Page 1)

or some time online, or at a county veterans service office, and then followed up by mailing in the documents. appropriate Every veteran and their family deserves our thanks, and no eligible veteran should miss out."

The Ohio Veterans Bonus is open to veterans of the Persian Gulf War era as well as the eras of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, regardless of where they served, as well as the next of kin of those who were killed inaction or died of disease as a result of in-theater service. The Bonus is not subject to federal or state taxes, and can be used for any purpose.

Specific criteria for award of the Ohio Veterans Bonus is: service in the Armed Forces of more than 90 days active duty, not for training, during the periods of the Persian Gulf War and the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq. For the Persian Gulf, the eligible period is from August 2, 1990 through March 3, 1991; for Afghanistan, from October 7, 2001 through a date to be determined by the President, and for Iraq, from March 19, 2003 through December 31, 2011. Eligible veterans must have been Ohio residents at the time of their entry into the service, and must be Ohio residents currently.

The bonus pays \$100 a month to veterans who served in the Persian Gulf theater, or in the countries of Afghanistan or Iraq, up to a maximum of \$1,000. For veterans who served elsewhere, the payment is \$50 a month up to a \$500 maximum. Veterans medically discharged due to injuries sustained in combat can receive \$1,000, plus for months of service elsewhere. Family members of those killed in action or who died from disease as a result of their intheater service can receive a bonus of \$5,000 plus whatever the service member was eligible for, up to a total of \$6,500.

Veterans needing more information or who want to apply can call tollfree to 1-877-OHIOVET (1-877-644-6838) option 2, www.veteransbonus.ohio.gov, visit any county veterans service office (see www.dvs.ohio.gov for an interactive map of the county offices). The department also provides information about the bonus through its social media and at veterans' events, and has advertised the program in print and broadcast media.

The Ohio Veterans Bonus continues a tradition of bonuses to reward Ohio veterans that dates back to the Civil War: however, these other war bonuses are now closed.

"The Moon Gives You Light~ The Bugles and The Drums Give You Music~ And My Heart, O My Soldiers~ My Veterans~ My Heart Gives You Love."~Walt Whitman~



Marine Toys for Tots Foundation Columbus, Ohio

The 2012 Toys For Tots Campaign for Columbus, and surrounding Central Ohio Counties officially began the season on October 1st for 84 days until Christmas. This year the Marines, Sailors, and civilian volunteers of Lima Co 3D Battalion. 25th Marines and surrounding local communities are going to make every effort to make the Toys For Tots Campaign very successful. Americans are the people we are because we understand what it means to have a selfless spirit. We know what it is to have a good life. This year we are appealing to the giving spirit of humanity. To serve someone in greater need than ourselves. Think of your children. What would you do to prevent them from suffering? As a parent, we do

whatever it takes for our children not to experience a single moment of grief. Toys For Tots is a program designed to bring people together and to allow those less fortunate than ourselves to celebrate equally. They are here to give every child in Franklin, Delaware, Fairfield, Hocking, Licking, Madison, Perry, Pickaway, and Union counties a fitting Holiday Season. For more information you can contact Gunnery Sergeant Ralph E. Grimes. For a list of drop-offs and for more information you can http://columbus-oh.toysfortots.org/localcoordinator-sites/Ico-sites/Default.aspx.



"Flu Clinic 2012"

Vaccination is the surest way to protect against getting the flu. The flue can become more than just a feverish, achy condition that lasts a few days. Hundreds and thousands of people in the U.S. are hospitalized every vear with complications from influenza. Be sure to get your flu shot every year to protect yourself and help keep the flu from spreading to others. Columbus VA is offering Free Walkin Flu Clinics to all Veterans, who are enrolled in VA health care. The Columbus VA Walk-in Flu Clinic will operate until December 14. For more information call (614) 257-VA doesn't vaccinate family member of Veterans or VA staff. If they would like to get a flu shot, check the flu shot locator on Flu.gov.



Walk-in Flu Clinic Monday thru Friday

9 a.m to 3 p.m. (No appointment necessary) Columbus VA 420 North James Road Columbus, OH 43219





"Winter Heating Season"

Energy Assistance Fact Sheet for 2012-2013 winter heating season. The Fact Sheet captures all of the programs available to Columbia Gas of Ohio customers in one simple guide. It gives a brief description of each program, including PIPP and HEAP, as well as fuel funds, payment plans and their energy efficiency programs. Columns match a client's income level with the programs for which they are eligible. Forecasters believe that the 2012-2013 heating season will bring more normal temperatures, colder customers will use more gas. So while natural gas prices remain near 10-year lows, this winter's bills may be higher.

HEAP – Home Energy Assistance Program – Provides a one-time

Income Eligibility Requirements			
HEAP, Winter Crisis Program, Auction Fuel Fund & Utility Fuel Fund Up to 200% of Federal Poverty Guidelines			
Winter Crisis Fuel Fund Up to 175%			
WarmChoice, PIPP Plus & HeatShare Up to 150%			
0:	Income		
Size of	150% of	175% of	200% of
or Famil	Federal	Federal	Federal
	Poverty	Poverty	Poverty
У	Guidelines	Guidelines	Guidelines
1	\$16,755.0	\$19,547.5	\$22,340.0
	0	0	0
2	\$22,695.0	\$26,477.5	\$30,260.0
	0	0	0
3	\$28,635.0	\$33,407.5	\$38,180.0
	0	0	0
4	\$34,575.0	\$40,337.5	\$46,100.0
	0	0	0
5	\$40,515.0	\$47,267.5	\$54,020.0
	0	0	0
6	\$46,455.0	\$54,197.5	\$61,940.0
7	0	0	0
7	\$52,395.0	\$61,127.5	\$69,860.0
8	0 \$58,335.0	0 \$68,057.5	0 \$77.780.0
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	For Family	For Family	For Family
	Units with	Units with	Units with
	more than	more than	more than
	(8)	(8)	(8)
	members,	members,	members,
	add	add	add
	\$5,940 for	\$6,930 for	\$7,920 for
	each	each	each
	member	member	member

assistance payment. Applications for the 2012-2013 Regular HEAP program will be accepted through May 31st, 2013. For more information or to apply, contact the local Community Action Agency or contact HEAP toll free at 1-800-282-0880.

Winter Crisis Program - Formerly known as Emergency HEAP -Provides assistance once per heating season to eligible households that are disconnected or threatened with disconnection. You must sign up for the Percentage of Income Payment Plan (PIPP) or another payment plan in order to emergency benefits. receive Emergency HEAP can also help pay for heating system repairs in certain cases. Applications will accepted November 1 through March 31. Applications must be completed at your local Community Action Agency.

Auction Fuel Fund – A fund of last resort – you must have exhausted all other available emergency assistance programs. The fund provides up to \$250 per heating season for customers. PIPP Plus customers will require notice of disconnection. A customer payment must have been made within the last 90 days or a \$25 co-pay is required. To apply for these funds contact your local Community Action Agency.

Utility Fuel Fund – Provides a onetime assistance payment of up to \$250 per heating season to maintain or restore service. You do not need to be disconnected or facing disconnection to qualify. Apply through your local Community Action Agency.

Winter Crisis Fuel Fund - A fund of last resort — you must have exhausted all other available emergency assistance programs. The fund provides up to \$175 for customer who are disconnected or threatened with disconnection. Apply through your local Community Action Agency.

WarmChoice - Columbia Gas offers an energy inspection and weatherization program for qualifying customers. WarmChoice services are provided at no cost and

can reduce customer bills by an average of 30 percent. And all customers are left with safe gas heating equipment and a more comfortable home. For information go to columbiagasohio.com or contact the statewide referral service at 1-800-952-3037 to be directed to your local provider.

PIPP Plus - Percentage of Income Payment Plan Plus - If your total household income is at or less than 150 percent of federal poverty guidelines, you might be eligible to pay just six percent of your monthly household income or a minimum of \$10 for your natural gas bill year-round. The plan includes an arrearage crediting program when a PIPP Plus household pay the monthly PIPP Plus payment on time and in full. Some of your old debt and the rest of that month's bill will go away in the form of a credit on your utility account. Enroll through your local Community Action Agency.

HeatShare - Columbia's fuel fund program combines contributions from their customers, employees, and shareholders with company donations to assist payment-troubled customers who have exhausted other forms of financial help or who have special hardships. To apply for HeatShare, contact your local chapter of The Salvation Army.

Community Action Agencies - For a list of local Community Action Agencies and their contact information, visit ColumbiaGasOhio.com or call Columbia Gas at 1-800-344-4077.





"Winter Heating Season" (Continued from Page 3)

No Income Eligibility Requirement

Payment Plans - Columbia gas makes every attempt to assist customer who are having difficulty paying their gas bills. Customers should contact us immediately at 1-800-344-4077 to make special arrangements.

Budget Payment Plan - Spreads the cost of winter heating more evenly over the year. It won't reduce your overall cost of home heating, but it can help to avoid peak winter bills so you can plan household expenses more conveniently. For information, call Columbia Gas at 1-800-344-4077.

Home Performance Plan - Open to all Columbia Gas residential heating customers, this program offers discounted home energy audits and generous rebates on cost-efficiency improvements. including air sealing, attic and wall insulation and replacement highefficiency gas furnaces. The rebates can reduce the cost of the energy-efficiency improvements by hundreds or thousands of dollars, and the improvements can reduce a home's annual energy usage by 30% or more. Call 1-877-644-6674 for details.

Restoring Service - In order to have service restored, areas in and around the appliances must provide a safe and healthy working environment for Columbia Gas representatives. They also request that you know the location of your natural gas meter and all natural gas appliances that require attention as well as appropriate access arrangements.



"Winter is the time for comfort, for good food and warmth, for the touch of a friendly hand and for a talk beside the fire: it is the time for home."

By Edith Sitwell



Sínce Our Last Publication....

"VA Guarantees 20 millionth Loan" - VA's Home Loan Program Continues to Lead Mortgage Industry. On October 26, 2012 the 20 millionth loan was guaranteed for a home in Woodbridge, Va., purchased by the surviving spouse of an Iraq War Veteran who passed away in 2010. Established in 1944 as part of the original GI Bill of Rights for returning World War II Veterans it has grown to the point that the VA has guaranteed 540,000 mortgages in 2012.

Veterans may obtain a certificate of eligibility for a VA-guaranteed home loan through the Joint Department of Defense – VA web portal eBenefits at www.ebenefits.va.gov. To obtain more information about the VA Home Loan Program, visit the program's home page at www.benefits.va.gove/homeloans.

"VA to Screen Vets for Lung Cancer in Early Stages" - On August 13, 2012 the VA has agreed to start CT scanning for lung cancer at its earliest states at VA medical facilities. Through the efforts of the Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) and The Lung Cancer Alliance it is now in effect.

Each year, some 8,000 veterans enter the VA healthcare system with advanced stage lung cancer. After five years, only about 15 percent of them survive.

Vietnam veterans—indeed all who have seen war up close and personal—are known to be at a higher risk for lung cancer than their civilian counterparts because of exposure to a variety of toxic chemical and carcinogenic substances during their time in the

military as well as higher rates of smoking.

"VA Offers a New Tool to Help Veterans Prevent Diabetes" - On October 5, 2012 the VA issued a news release on the announcement of a pilot version of the Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP), a program being promoted nationally by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, aimed at reducing the number of Veterans who develop diabetes. Approximately 24 percent of Veterans have Type 2 diabetes.

"The Diabetes Prevention Program will provide Veterans with another tool to help them lead healthier, fuller lives, reducing their risk for diabetes," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki.

To learn more about the VA's prevention program, visit http://www.prevention.va.gov/index.asp.

"Ohio Veterans Home Receives \$798,987 State Cemetery Grant" - SANDUSKY – The Ohio Veterans Home-Sandusky was the recipient of a \$798,987 grant check for cemetery improvements on November 20, 2012 at the home. The grant provides for 100 percent of the allowable costs associated with the improvement and maintenance of the Ohio Veterans Home Cemetery.

"SBA Helps Veterans Start, Grow and Expand Small Business"

This year SBA partnered with the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense to develop a national entrepreneurship training program for transitioning service members as part of the new Transition Assistance Program. Operation Boots to Business: From Service to Startup was piloted with all four branches of the services in summer and fall 2012.

They also have Women Veterans Igniting the Spirit of Entrepreneurship (V-WISE), that focuses on training, networking and



"SBA Helps Veterans Start, Grow and Expand Small Business" (Continued from Page 4)

mentorship for women veterans and Operation Endure & Grow, targets National Guard and Reserve component members, their families and partners. Another program is Service-Disabled the Veteran-Owned Small Business (SDVOSBs). For more information on any of their programs, visit www.sba.gov/vets www.sba.gov/reservists.

"Call center to connect low income veterans, active military with legal services"

On November 2, 2012, The Ohio Military/Veterans Legal Assistance Project and Capital University Law School are partnering to make it easier for Central Ohio's low income veterans and active military personal to get legal assistance they might not otherwise be able to afford. The pilot program will open in early January 2013. For further information about the call center can found www.law.capital.edu/Veterans Clini c/.



"The Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame"

On November 8, 2012 at the National Museum of the U.S. Air in Dayton, Lieutenant Force Governor Mary Taylor and Tom Moe. Director of the Ohio Department of Veterans Service, inducted 15 members of the Class of 2012 into the Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame. A bronze plaque is dedicated to every class memorializing those veterans inducted into the Hall of Fame.

The Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame is administered and sponsored by the Ohio Department of Veterans Services. The Hall of Fame is not a military hall of fame. Those selected for the honor of induction

are veterans who have honorably served their country through military service and continue to serve and inspire their fellow citizens with their deeds and accomplishments throughout their lifetime. One of the veterans was Mr. David M. Bradley, a Westerville-area resident who also served as executive director of the Franklin County Veterans Services Commission.

~Congratulations~

Class of 2012:

David M. Bradley Robert L. Dean, Jr. Robert J. Dixon Jack L. Ernest Harold J. Filmore Lawrence V. Fornes James P, Fortune Richard P. Hartman Kathleen A. Hayes Stephen W. Heck, Jr. Walter P. Knake, Jr. Wary C. McHugh Charles C. Metcalf Robert L. Queisser James W. Snyder



"Dedication"

November 11, 2012 Buckeye Chapter 500, Columbus, Ohio, Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH) dedicated their new Purple Heart Monument at the Motts Military Museum.

"Military Commercial Driver's License Act of 2012"

The White House, Office of the Press Secretary sent out a statement on S. 3624 on October 19, 2012. The President signed into law:

S. 3624, the "Military Commercial Driver's License Act of 2012," which permits a State to issue commercial driver's licenses to members of the Armed Forces not domiciled in the State but whose duty station is located in the State, without triggering withholding of Federal funds to that State for certain Federal highway programs.

"Veterans' Infertility Treatment Bill"

In September 2012 the Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs Approved legislation that would expand access to infertility treatment for disabled veterans. The bill would authorize the Department of Veterans Affairs to cover the cost of in vitro fertilization treatment for veterans and spouses.

"In Congress"

H.R. 26 Veterans Mental Health Screening and Assessment Act: To adapt a program of professional, confidential screening to detect mental health injuries acquired during deployment in support of a contingency operation ultimately to reduce the incidence of suicide among veterans.

H.R. 2433 Veterans Opportunity to Work Act: Creates an employment training service program for veterans and those leaving active duty and modifies federal program that offer home mortgage loan guarantees, ambulance service and pension payments to veterans.

H.B. 1383 Restoring GI Bill Fairness Act of 2011: Grandfathers post-9/11 GI Bill rates for certain student-veterans already accepted at private colleges in selected states as of January 4, 2011. Private college student-veterans capped at \$17,500.

H.R. 674 Tax Incentive for Hiring: New three-year employment retraining assistance program for up to 100,000 unemployment veterans, with changes to the TAP.

Contact your legislators with your concerns and for more information.



"A man who is good enough to shed his blood for his country is good enough to be given a square deal afterwards." Teddy Roosevelt



"Helping Vets Land Jobs"

Transition GPS, is the first military's Transition Assistance Program (TAP) to be overhauled in 20 years. Transition GPS is designed to expand counseling and guidance for veterans leaving the military. The program will be implemented by the end of 2013. It will include a Occupational "Military Code Crosswalk" to decode military skills civilian and training into occupations.

"OSU Helps Veterans"

In October 2012 OSU announced the opening of a new office, the "Office of Military and Veterans Services". This office will handle those GI Bill benefit issues while providing a "one-stop shop" where veterans can go for all kinds of assistance. The office is located in the Student Academic Services building on W. Lane Avenue.

"Benefits and Discounts"

- ~ The 2012 Federal Benefits for Veterans, Dependents and Survivors is available online at http://www.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits_book.asp. You can also download the version on your Kindle and other devices.
- ~ Many Veterans are eligible for free fishing and hunting licenses and other recreational discounts check out the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) website for more information.



"This year the Franklin County Veteran Services Office assisted 854 Veterans and their Families during the Holiday Gift Card Program during Thanksgiving."



"The United States of America Vietnam War Commemoration"



From May 28, 2012 to November 11, 2025 is the Commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War. On May 16, 2012, President Obama stated: "This month we'll begin to mark the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War, a time when, to our shame, our veterans did not always receive the respect and the thanks they deserved - - a mistake that must never be repeated." For more information got to http://www.vietnamwar50th.com/.







The United States commemorates the 200th anniversary of the War of 1812 and the penning of "The Star-Spangled Banner". The War of 1812 represents what many see as the definitive end of the American Revolution. For more information go to: http://www.visit1812.com/ or http://www.ourflagwasstillthere.org/.





Everyone should be cautious about traveling in extreme winter weather. Cold, snow and ice are demanding on cars, drivers and passengers. Cold affects metal, rubber, and other materials in your car. It can reduce the effectiveness of your vehicles' battery by at least 50 It can freeze tires and percent. keep them flat on the bottom for at least the first half-mile of travel. It can thicken your car's lubricants, making the engine work too hard. Most importantly, extreme winter weather can threaten your life. Here are a few tips to stay safe:

- ~ Plan before you travel
- ~ Prepare your vehicle
- ~ Be aware of the weather
- ~ Make yourself easy to find
 - ~ Stay in your vehicle
 - ~ Avoid Overexertion



~ Ask about our Winter Coat & our Smoke Alarm Programs. ~



"Another Day, another Month, another Year, another Smile, another Tear, another Winter, A Summer too, But there will be Another You!

May Lovely, Happy Times Decorate this Time of the Season. May Warm, Special Memories brighten your New Year, may the Wonder of Christmas be with you Forever."

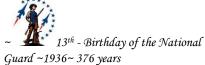


December 2012



7th - Pearl Harbor Remembrance

Janushan 9th - First Day of Chanukah



~ Happy Hanukkah 16th - Last Day of Chanukah



17th - Wright Brothers Day



24th - Christmas Eve



~ 125th - Christmas Day



26th - Kwanzaa

(until Jan 1)



31st - New Year's F.ve

January 2013



1st - New Year's Day



Presidential Inauguration

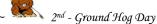


21st - Martin Luther King Day

February 2013









10th - Chinese New Year



12th - Mardi Gras



14th - Valentine's Day



18th - President's Day



"Night Before Christmas – Veterans"

Twas the night before Christmas, he lived all alone, In a one bedroom house made of plaster A stone. I had come down the chimney with presents to give and to see just who in this home did live.

I looked all about a strange sight I did see, No tinsel, no presents, not even a tree. No stocking by the fire, just boots filled with sand, on the wall hung pictures of far distant lands. Whit medals and badges, awards of all kind a sober thought came through my mind. For this house was different, so dark and dreary, I knew I had found the home of a soldier, once I could see clearly. I heard stories about them, I had to see more so I walked down the hall and pushed open the door. And there he lay sleeping silent alone, curled up on the floor in his one bedroom home. His face so gentle, his room in such disorder, not how I pictured a United States soldier.

Was this the hero of whom I'd just read? Curled up I his poncho, a floor for his bed? His head was clean shaven, his weathered face tan, I soon understood this was more than a man. For I realized the families that I saw that night owed their lives to these men who were willing to fight. Soon 'round the world, the children would play, and grownups would celebrate on a bright Christmas day. They all enjoyed freedom each month of the year, because of soldiers like this one lying here. I couldn't help wonder how many lay alone on a cold Christmas Eve in a land far from home. Just the very thought brought a tear to my eye, I dropped to my knees and started to cry. The soldier awakened and I heard a rough voice, "Santa don't cry, this life is my choice; I fight for freedom, I don't ask for more, my life is my God, my country, my Corps.'

With that he rolled over and drifted off into sleep, I couldn't control it, I continued to weep. I watched him for hours, so silent and still, I noticed he shivered from the cold night's chill. So I took off my jacket, the one

mad of red, and covered this Soldier from his toes to his head. And I put on his t-shirt of gray and black, with an eagle and a Army patch embroidered on back. And although it barely fit me, I began to swell with pride, and for a shining moment, I was United States Army deep inside.

I didn't want to leave him on that cold dark night, this guardian of honor so willing to fight. Then the soldier rolled over, whispered with a voice so clean and pure, "Carry on Santa, It's Christmas Day, all is secure."

One look at my watch, and I knew he was right, Merry Christmas my friend, and to all a good night!



"From all of us at the Franklin County Veterans Services Commission We Wish all Military, Veterans, and their Families during the Holiday Season ~ A Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!"





FRANKLIN COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE COMMISSION 250 W BROAD ST COLUMBUS OH 43215-2787

